

The *Eastern European History Review* is an international and interdisciplinary annually online and open access peer-reviewed journal about studies on Central and Eastern Europe in the Modern Age (XIV–XIX). The Journal is also the expression of the Study Center CESPOM (Centro Studi sull'età dei Sobieski e della Polonia Moderna – Center Study on the Age of Sobieski and Modern Poland) of the University of Tuscia, born in 1997.

It publishes articles with significant approaches and original interpretations in all research fields concerning Central and Eastern Europe, with specific attention to the History Sciences.

This Special Issue of *Eastern European History Review* deals with the history of diplomacy and its executors – diplomats (ambassadors, legates, nuncios, internuncios, agents and others) – in the seventeenth century's Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

As a state conglomerate culturally and politically, closely connected to Western Europe, and for its specific institutional form of a “noble republic”, the Commonwealth has created, in the field of diplomatic practice, institutions, principles and ceremonies unique in the European context.

The focus of the volume is the historiographic stream of the *New Diplomatic History*, without withdrawing from classic approaches that remain an important field of research.

Tracing the salient moments and facts of the complex history of the seventeenth century of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the volume – with the participation of authors from different parts of Europe and beyond – constitutes an international opportunity to reflect on issues and topics of old and new diplomatic history.

Diplomats and Diplomacy in the Early Modern Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (XVII century) constitutes a result of the research activity and scientific collaboration inherent to the project directed by Dr Dorota Gregorowicz *The Holy See and the crisis of sovereignty of John II Casimir Vasa and Michael Korybut Wiśniowiecki's election (1660–1669)*, n. 2018/28/C/HS3/00176, financed by the National Science Centre, Poland.

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DIPLOMATS AND DIPLOMACY

IN THE EARLY MODERN POLISH-LITHUANIAN COMMONWEALTH (XVII CENTURY)

Edited by

Dorota Gregorowicz and Alessandro Boccolini



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EASTERN EUROPEAN HISTORY REVIEW: LA RIVISTA

Il Comitato redazionale e scientifico è lieto di presentare al pubblico la rivista scientifica *Eastern European History Review*.

Con un carattere internazionale e interdisciplinare, una cadenza annuale e una fruibilità *open access* la rivista focalizza i propri interessi sulle dinamiche occorse nell'Europa Orientale durante tutta l'età moderna (XIV-XIX). *Eastern European History Review* è espressione del Centro Studi dell'Università della Tuscia CESPoM (Centro Studi sull'età dei Sobieski e della Polonia Moderna) nato nel 1997 per intuizione del Prof. Gaetano Platania, Direttore Emerito della Rivista.

L'iniziativa editoriale che presentiamo nasce dall'evidente mancanza in Italia di una rivista scientifica relativa alla storia dell'Europa centro-orientale in Età Moderna, nonostante la penisola abbia giocato un ruolo fondamentale per la Storia e la Cultura di una parte integrante del continente, a torto considerata come lontana e periferica.

Consapevoli di questo, il Comitato ha posto quale obiettivo primario della *Eastern European History Review* quello di offrire uno spazio di riflessione e di discussione su temi che appartengono alla storia dell'Europa centro-orientale, e insieme alle relazioni - politiche e culturali - che questa vasta area del Vecchio Continente ha avuto con l'occidente d'Europa, e l'Italia in particolare, incoraggiando il dialogo tra studiosi e esperti di settore, e tra differenti approcci della ricerca scientifica.

Il Comitato Redazionale e Scientifico

EASTERN EUROPEAN HISTORY REVIEW: THE JOURNAL

The Editorial and Scientific Board are proud delighted to present the *Eastern European History Review* under the aegis of Sette Città Editore.

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It publishes articles with significant approaches and original interpretations in all research fields concerning Central and Eastern Europe, with specific attention to the History sciences.

The editorial initiative we present comes from the obvious lack of a journal, in Italy, concerning the history of Central and Eastern Europe during the Modern Age, this despite its fundamental role in the history and culture of that part of the continent, wrongly considered distant and peripheral.

Quite the contrary is true, in fact. Main objective of the journal is to create a space for reflection and discussion on topics pertaining to Central and Eastern Europe, but also relations with Continental Europe, encouraging dialogue between scholars and experts in the field, and between different approaches of scientific research.

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INTRODUCTION

The crisis of political history, particularly profound since the 1960s and the subsequent cultural turn, has penalised the scientific investigation of “international” relations¹ in the early modern period for many years². Over the last decades, though, there have been several calls for new methodological and conceptual approaches to diplomatic studies, some of them extraordinarily fruitful and inspiring³. Nowadays, as Tracey Sowerby observed, «the *New Diplomatic History*, no longer so new, has become a broad church. It has successfully integrated wider concerns into a field that was once dominated by the study of bureaucracy and foreign policy»⁴. Integrated, but not replaced, which is also essential to emphasise. That is mainly why scholars no longer consider diplomacy and foreign policy making as coterminous, but do assimilate plenty of different aspects diplomatic practice entailed.

One cannot notice that from the point of view of contemporary research on the early modern history of diplomacy, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth constitutes an interesting phenomenon that has not been sufficiently developed yet, especially in the international forum of researchers along with their various historiographical traditions. There are still many blank spots in exploring this topic, which remain open to a contemporary historian. This special issue of *Eastern European History Review* seeks to encourage a more profound reflection on particularities and significance of the Polish-Lithuanian diplomatic practice in the early modern period, especially during the seventeenth century, by conveying into conversation an international set of scholars from Poland, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Hungary, Italy, Spain, Sweden and Australia, interested in various aspects of diplomatic history. By bringing consciousness of diplomatic agency to bear on various areas of cultural and political practice, our authors have pressed their research beyond the horizons of their “national histories” that continue to dominate most treatments of premodernity.

On the threshold of the early modern period, *Rzeczpospolita* found itself among the political entities that adopted the praxis of permanent diplomatic missions exchange very late (only in the eighteenth century), relying on the old system of extraordinary embassies, of medieval provenance. However, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was no exception on a European scale. The general rules for foreign relations’ conduct appeared similar in Portugal, Scotland, Hungary, Scandinavia (Sweden and Denmark), Switzerland, and several German states⁵.

Federico Chabod considered the permanent diplomatic service, next to the professional army and elaborated bureaucratic apparatus, as the basis for the affirmation of the “early modern state”⁶. *Rzeczpospolita* did not possess any of these elements, but can it be denied the character of statehood from a historical point of view⁷? Subsequently, for Matthew Smith Anderson, the history of early

1 I put the word “international” in quotation marks, considering the imperfection of this concept for the analysis of political relations in early modern Europe. Cf. Tracey A. Sowerby, “Early Modern Diplomatic History”, *History Compass*, 14, 9 (2016): 444.

2 Stefano Andretta, *L'arte della prudenza. Teorie e prassi della diplomazia nell'Italia del XVI e XVII secolo* (Roma: Binklink, 2006), 7.

3 Karl W. Schweizer and Matt J. Schumann, “The Revitalisation of Diplomatic History”, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 19, 2 (2008): 149-86; John Watkins, “Toward a New Diplomatic History of Medieval and Early Modern Europe”, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 38, 1 (2008): 1-14; Diana Carrió-Invernizzi, “A New Diplomatic History and the Networks of Spanish Diplomacy in the Baroque Era”, *The International History Review*, 36, 4 (2014): 603-18; Dorothea Nolde, “Was ist Diplomatie und wenn ja, wie viele? Herausforderungen und Perspektiven einer Geschlechtergeschichte der frühneuzeitlichen Diplomatie”, *Historische Anthropologie*, 21, 2 (2013): 180-98.

4 Sowerby, “Early Modern Diplomatic History”, 441.

5 Giuseppe Galasso, “Le relazioni internazionali nell’età moderna (secoli XV-XVIII)”, *Rivista Storica Italiana*, 111, 1 (1999): 10.

6 Federico Chabod, *Idea di Europa e politica dell’equilibrio* (Bologna: Mulino, 1995).

7 Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society. A Comparative Historical Analysis* (London-New York: Routledge, 1992), 185-86: «The kingdom of Poland had increased its power and influence by a dynastic union with Lithuania and expansion eastward, and had made itself the principal bulwark of Latin Christendom on the eastern marches. But the heterogeneous population, the dual governmental structure of Poland-Lithuania and the practice of elective monarchy prevented its consolidation into an effective stato». Cf. Jan Sowa, *Fantomowe ciało króla. Peryferyjne zmagania z*

modern diplomacy constituted a slow but increasingly evident evolution towards the system of permanent representation. He considered contacts between polities that failed to conform to that model «less developed ones, [...] where diplomacy was less important and diplomatic organisation more primitive». Anderson believed that from the point of view of diplomatic practice, one could speak of two “separate Europes” and that «between these two Europes there were as yet only slender links»⁸. Nowadays, historiography views the issue of permanent diplomatic posts in a significantly different way. As Riccardo Fubini suggests, the general deficiency of institutionalisation of the then diplomacy makes the equality of residency and modernity dubious⁹. Also, Sowerby appropriately stated that «the exchange of resident ambassadors did not extend across all of Europe. Rather, asymmetrical relations were not uncommon within Europe and continued to be so into the eighteenth century»¹⁰.

Therefore, nothing could be more erroneous than assuming the passivity of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth on the “international” arena of early modern Europe. The young Polish Vasa dynasty, the more as it functioned within the elective monarchy, manifested a strong need to affirm its position on the European forum. Moreover, the necessity to maintain intensive contacts with foreign partners was caused by the continuous involvement of *Rzeczpospolita* in armed conflicts on various fronts. Due to its geopolitical position, the vastness of the territory and the leading role for the implementation of the Catholic Reform, Poland-Lithuania occupied a distinctive part in the entire system of “international” relations of early modern Europe. All the more so, its specific tradition and political practice concerning the implementation of foreign policy, conducting diplomatic activity outside its borders, as well as accepting foreign legations *in loco*, requires further attention of contemporary historiography.

The special issue of *Eastern European History Review*, *Diplomats and Diplomacy in the Early Modern Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (XVII century)*, opens with a group of articles regarding some general institutional and technical aspects of the functioning of the Polish-Lithuanian diplomatic service.

Dorota Gregorowicz (*Diplomacy of the Commonwealth, Diplomacy of the King: the Peculiarity of Foreign Policy Making in the Seventeenth Century Poland-Lithuania*) deals with the topicality of research on the history of diplomacy in the early modern Poland-Lithuania, in the context of scant development of permanent diplomatic missions. The article presents considerations on the subjectivity of the *ius legationis* in *Rzeczpospolita*. Gregorowicz reflects on the competencies of the monarch and of the Commonwealth (personified in the *sejm* and Senate councils) in this matter. To this end, she primarily analyses the content of the sixteenth – and seventeenth-century parliamentary constitutions regarding the conduct of foreign policy. Moreover, the article refers to political practice as a determining factor for the legal structure of Poland-Lithuania.

The Union of Lublin (1569), as the basis for the execution of a joint diplomatic activity of the early modern Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, is analysed by Marius Sirutavičius (*Partnership in a Union with Diverging Interests: Cooperation between the Kingdom of Poland and Grand Duchy of Lithuania in Diplomatic Activities at the Turn of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*). The author emphasises the initially divergent interests of both states in addressing the directions of the foreign policy of *Rzeczpospolita* (especially concerning contacts with Muscovy) and their influence on the functioning of the diplomatic service. Moreover, Sirutavičius draws attention to the evolution and gradual uniformisation processes of the Polish and Lithuanian visions of conducting foreign policy,

nowoczesną formą (Kraków: Universitas, 2011). According to Sowa, «the concept of the “ghost body of the King” [inspired by Ernst Kantorowicz] marks a notional horizon in which *Rzeczpospolita* presents itself as a non-existent state entity, or in the process of its disappearance, utterly unsuitable for any modern form of social, political and economic organisation, which took shape in Europe from the early modern age, with the nascent capitalism and parliamentarism» (285). Sowa’s perspective is certainly interesting, although historically not sustainable. Translation in English is of the author.

8 Matthew S. Anderson, *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy 1450–1919* (London-New York: Longman, 1993), 27–8.

9 Riccardo Fubini, *La “residentialité” de l’ambassadeur dans le mythe et dans la réalité: une enquête sur les origines* (Paris: PUF, 1998); Id., “Diplomacy and government in the Italian city-states of the fifteenth century (Florence and Venice)”, in *Diplomacy and Early Modern Culture*, eds. Robyn Adams and Rosanna Cox (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 26–8.

10 Sowerby, “Early Modern Diplomatic History”, 442.

which took place in the initial period of the reign of Sigismund III Vasa, pointing to the multilateral origins of those developments.

The problem of the source material's characteristics for studying the history of diplomacy is discussed by nunciatures' specialists Henryk Litwin and Paweł Duda in a joint article *Correspondence of Warsaw Nuncio Antonio Santa Croce with Roman Catholic Bishops from 1629 – Frequency, Intensity and Content*. The researchers focused on the analysis of "internal" correspondence maintained by the apostolic nuncio with hierarchs of the Polish-Lithuanian Catholic Church, underlining its parallel importance in relation to the mainstream canals of diplomatic information exchange (between the Polish-Lithuanian periphery – nunciature's chancellery and Roman centre – Secretariat of State).

Finally, the first part of the book includes the reflection of Michał Salamonik on some non-institutional structures and mechanisms of diplomatic activity in the early modern Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, along with the case study on the diplomatic context of the postal and news-spreading duties of the Gdańsk merchant and postmaster Francesco Gratta [1613–1676] (*News Agents and Postmasters: Background Figures or Active Diplomats?*).

The second part of this book is devoted to diplomacy as to the art of great politics' conduct and to the geopolitical position of Poland-Lithuania in seventeenth-century Europe. The advantages of diplomatic negotiations as an alternative to pursuing *Rzeczpospolita's* foreign policy in the military field are highlighted here. This group of articles may seem of a more traditional topicality. Still, it is significant to accentuate its emphasis on the multilateral character of early modern diplomatic relations, strongly including the subject of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Miguel Conde Pazos analyses the impact of the Catholic Monarchy's diplomacy on the involvement of *Rzeczpospolita* in the pan-European conflict (*Spanish Diplomats in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the Thirty Years' War*). This example perfectly illustrates the breadth of political, economic and dynastic interactions that were determined by the diplomatic activities of all major European countries, even those geographically distant from each other. Conde Pazos also draws attention to the personal profile of diplomats sent on specific missions and to their respective political culture, experience, and preparation for dedicated charges.

The role of political nuances and, at first glance, of less important elements in conducting a diplomatic activity is treated by Ryszard Skowron (*Palatinate: the Key to Europe. On the Art of Diplomacy of Władysław IV Vasa*). The author points to the role of a seemingly secondary German state, as well as to the complicated system of ties between single European states at that time, in the perspective of the implementation of the great political and dynastic plans of the Polish-Lithuanian monarch, primarily related to his efforts to reclaim the Swedish throne. In fact, it is worth observing how the interests represented and defended through early modern diplomatic negotiation were primarily dynastic, typical of the sovereign families that divided the European spaces between themselves¹¹. In his article, Skowron has distinguished two basic categories defining Władysław IV's foreign policy: peace tactics (diplomatic activity and matrimonial policy) and war (military involvement in connection with the events of the Thirty Years' War).

The English point of view on the last years of the Polish Vasas' rule and on the election of 1669 is presented by Aleksandra Ziober (*The Last Years of the Reign of John Casimir Vasa and Interregnum after his Abdication in the Light of Reports of Francis Sanderson and Robert Yard*). The author shows how the image preserved in diplomatic accounts of various backgrounds' services allows us to recreate the historical narrative for many research topics with more detail. Thus diplomacy becomes a way of acquiring knowledge about single courts and state entities. Ziober also refers to the degree of understanding of the particular form and functioning of the Polish-Lithuanian political structures in seventeenth-century Europe.

The universalist-political dimension of the Holy See's diplomats' activity during the short reign of Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki (1669–1673) is discussed by Alessandro Boccolini (*Diplomacy and Papal Politics during the "Unfortunate" Reign of Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki*). The author analysed the

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Claudio Rosso, "Burocrazia, fiscalità, diplomazia", in *Storia d'Europa e del Mediterraneo. Dal Medioevo all'età della globalizzazione*, sez. 5: *Età moderna (secoli XVI–XVIII)*, vol. XII: *Popoli, stati, equilibri di potere*, ed. Roberto Bizzocchi (Salerno-Roma: Salerno Editrice, 2013), 43.

activity of the then apostolic nunciature primarily in the context of the relations between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Ottoman Empire, as well as the papal vision of *Rzeczpospolita* as *Antemurale Christianitatis*.

As Barbara Stollberg-Rillinger observed, «another major theme within recent reassessments of early modern diplomacy has been non-verbal communication. The early modern diplomatic ceremonial was essential to the expression of hierarchies»¹². In fact, in the third part of the book, we deal with a set of texts referring to the issues of diplomatic ceremonial, as «in early modern European diplomacy, the relationship between the ceremonial symbols and the mechanisms of power was closer and carried more weight»¹³.

In Marta Szymańska's article, *The Ceremonial of Receiving of Albrycht Stanisław Radziwiłł and his Stay at the Courts of Western Europe as a Royal Envoy during the Journey of Prince Władysław Vasa 1624–1625*, the diplomatic role of the Lithuanian magnate, member of the Vasa Prince's retinue during Władysław's educational trip around Europe, as well as the diplomatic dimension of the entire enterprise, seemingly unrelated to the implementation of the Polish-Lithuanian foreign policy, are discussed. One of the key aspects of the study is how the ceremonial applied to the Prince's retinue members indicated the diplomatic nature of the expedition.

Mariusz Sawicki (*The Coronation Parliament of John III Sobieski in French-Language Reports Sent to London*) presents a picture of the anointing act and then the entire coronation *sejm* (1676) of the later victor from Vienna. The author shows the image that French diplomats, present at that time in Poland-Lithuania, created in their reports on the events of Sobieski's coronation: its political, social and ceremonial aspects. Interestingly, those reports were sent in London and not in Paris. Sawicki shows himself fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of historical interpreting similar creation that any external observers could create.

Ewelina Sikora (*Feasting and Fasting in Moscow: Peace Negotiation Between Poland-Lithuania and Muscovy as Seen Through Eating and Drinking Customs*) takes up the theme of feasting as an essential element of Polish-Lithuanian diplomatic practice during the missions to Muscovy. The article constitutes an important contribution for developing further research on material culture in the field of the history of diplomacy¹⁴, also in the context of ceremonial treatments and traditional usages.

Finally, Gaetano Platania draws attention to the institution of obedience missions that Polish-Lithuanian kings traditionally sent to the papal court in order to certify their loyalty to the Catholic Church and its superior (*Michał Radziwiłł's Obedience Embassy in the Rome of Pope Innocent XI Odescalchi between Diplomacy and Ceremonial*). The author presents a case study, a picture of the *Rzeczpospolita's* envoy's entry to the Eternal City in 1680, putting Michał Radziwiłł's mission in the large political context of the Holy League's organisation. The ceremonial becomes here an authentic baroque, theatrical representation, still, by no means deprived of its political importance.

The last part of the book is devoted to a series of outstanding personalities of diplomats operating in the context of seventeenth-century *Rzeczpospolita*. Many scholars have adopted an actor-centred approach to inquiry early modern diplomacy, and such career case studies result as extremely useful. Placing ambassadors at the heart of the analysis offers a rich research perspective regarding the relationships they cultivated, their contacts and personal capacities, as well as the individual factor in conducting foreign policy that has always accompanied the great policy's sketches.

Uładzimir Padalinski develops the topic of the diplomatic activity of Mikhayla Haraburda (*Diplomatic Activity as the Basis of Political Advancement and Material Reward in the Sixteenth-Century Grand Duchy of Lithuania: The Case of Mikhayla Haraburda*). It is a specific case study of a multiple envoy of

12 Barbara Stollberg-Rillinger, "Zeremoniell, Ritual, Symbol: Neue Forschungen zur symbolischen Kommunikation in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit", *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung*, 27, 3 (2000): 389-405. Cf. Sowerby, "Early Modern Diplomatic History", 445.

13 Jan Hennings, "The Semiotics of Diplomatic Dialogue: Pomp and Circumstance in Tsar Peter I's Visit to Vienna in 1698", *The International History Review*, 30, 3 (2008), 515.

14 Cf. Harriet Rudolph, "Entangled Objects and Hybrid Practices? Material Culture as a New Approach to the History of Diplomacy", in *Material Culture in Modern Diplomacy from the 15th to the 20th Century*, eds. Rudolph and Gregor M. Metzger (Oldenbourg: De Gruyter, 2016), 1-28.

the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth to Muscovy and Crimea. Padalinski shows the dynamics with which the involvement in the implementation of foreign policy could determine both the political career and the social status of a diplomat in the noble context of *Rzeczpospolita*. His study also provides an outstanding example of the Lithuanian ambassador's *cursus honorum*.

Krzysztof Zbaraski's Constantinopolitan mission is examined by Tetiana Grygorieva (*The "Decisive Embassy" of Prince Krzysztof Zbaraski to Constantinople (1622–1623) and European Diplomacy amidst the 'Thirty Years' War*). The article rejects the bilateral vision of Polish-Lithuanian and Ottoman diplomatic contacts, presenting the image of Zbaraski's expedition in a broad European context, including, *inter alia*, political relations of both countries with Transylvania, as well as their involvement in the events of the Thirty Years' War.

Peter P. Bajer presents a diplomatic career as a path of personal development and one of the ways to build a social position in the early modern *Rzeczpospolita*. The author observes the case of foreign newcomers or/and their families (based on the example of Scottish immigration), the desirable result of who was usually obtaining a noble status in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (*The Career of Jerzy (George) Bennet, the Scottish Agent of the Radziwiłł Family*)¹⁵.

The diplomatic mission as a field for the realisation of personal interests of a diplomat, in addition to the tasks provided by representing his political superior, is presented by Aleksandra Skrzypietz (*Between the King's Instructions and the Ambassador's Ambition. Cooperation Between Melchior de Polignac and Polish Magnates*). The author shows how diplomatic feedback could have influenced the evolution of the instructions entrusted to ambassadors and, consequently, had a direct impact on their political activity. Skrzypietz presents Polignac not only as a performer but as a co-creator of the French political program towards the *Rzeczpospolita* ruled by John III Sobieski. Finally, she explains the difficulties encountered by ambassadors of foreign countries in approaching the complex political and social context of the early modern Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

The activities of diplomats of Pope Innocent XI in Poland-Lithuania and at the imperial court, as well as the nature of their regular contacts with the Roman Curia, are presented by Claudia Curcuruto (*Francesco Buonvisi and Opizio Pallavicini. Correspondences and Activities of Two Apostolic Nuncios in the Service of Pope Innocent XI Odescalchi. 1676–1689*). The author focuses on the communicative aspects of the activities of the apostolic nunciatures. She presents diplomats as mediators between radically different (geographically, politically, culturally) realities (not only on the line of the royal/imperial court and the papal court but also between local bishops and the Bishop of Rome – the pope). Finally, the issue of mediation, as one of the crucial elements of early modern diplomatic practice, is presented by Béla Mihalik on the example of the activity of a relative of the Polish-Lithuanian monarch Augustus II the Strong (1697–1706, 1709–1733) – Bishop of Győr, Christian August (*The King's Cousin, the Emperor's Bishop. Christian August of Saxe-Zeitz as Mediator between Poland and the Holy See*). It is another text that highlights the problem of the personal interests of diplomats in carrying out their missions. In the case of Wettin, these were primarily the efforts to obtain the cardinal's hat. As observed by John Watkins, «the time has come for a multidisciplinary reevaluation of one of the oldest, and traditionally one of the most conservative, subfields in the modern discipline of history: the study of premodern diplomacy»¹⁶. Contemporary research on the history of diplomacy in the early modern *Rzeczpospolita* is doing quite well, but it still requires a reorientation and innovation of methodological approach. The history of diplomacy should no longer be seen as an abstract account of negotiations and treaties, disconnected from parallel social, economic and cultural aspects. Indeed, as this collection of studies demonstrates, historiography is continually discovering new research fields in matter. Among those contained in the presented volume, we can indicate: legal and institutional forms of early modern “international” relations, nature of diplomatic sources and character of the narrative present in the documents, multilaterality and complexity of the early modern interstate connections,

15 Recently on similar issues: Michał Salamonik, *In Their Majesties' Service. The Career of Francesco De Gratta (1613–1676) as a Royal Servant and Trader in Gdańsk* (Huddinge: Södertörns högskola, 2019); Wojciech Tygielski, *Dylematy włoskiego emigranta. Giovanni Battista Jacobelli (1603–1679), śpiewak i kapelan nadworny, kanonik warmiński* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2019).

16 Watkins, “Toward a New Diplomatic History”, 1.

their religious and confessional nature¹⁷, diplomatic ceremonial and non-verbal communication, tools and techniques used by ambassadors, *people* as direct implementers of the “art of diplomacy”, their *cursus honorum* and mechanisms of social advancement, cultural image expressed in diplomatic documents, social, economic, commercial and dynastic causes that determined political choices, as well as material culture in diplomacy¹⁸. This volume will undoubtedly contribute to the further development of contemporary analysis of these issues. We would like to continue to engage in new methods, ask additional questions, and rethink how early modern Polish-Lithuanian diplomacy is currently being studied.

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¹⁷ Cf. *Confessional Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Roberta Anderson and Charlotte Backerra (London-New York: Routledge, 2021).

¹⁸ Cf. Daniela Frigo, “Politica estera e diplomazia: figure problemi e apparati”, in *Storia degli antichi stati italiani*, eds. Gaetano Greco and Mario Rosa (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1996), 117.

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PIAE ET FORTITER: THE CAREER OF JERZY (GEORGE) BENNETT, THE SCOTTISH AGENT OF THE RADZIWIŁŁ FAMILY

ABSTRACT

Among the many Scots who migrated to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the seventeenth century were numerous merchants, craftsmen, military men, members of the clergy and diplomats. A number of them rose to prominence and were admitted to noble estate and high office. Some became members of the royal court or confidantes of the wealthiest and most powerful Polish aristocrats. This paper examines the career of Jerzy (George) Bennett who became an agent and close confidant of Duke Bogusław Radziwiłł, one of the wealthiest and most influential magnates of the Commonwealth. Although, strictly speaking, Bennett was not a diplomat like his more famous compatriots: Sir Patrick Gordon (1610–21), James VI and I's agent to Poland and Prussia, or his nephew Francis Gordon (1625–c.1642), envoy and merchant factor to Poland-Lithuania and Gdańsk, nevertheless, his diplomatic skills played a significant role in representing his patron. The correspondence between the Duke and Bennett, including letters and reports preserved in the archives of Vilnius and Warsaw, demonstrate that Bennett represented Radziwiłł's interests not just in Kiejdany (Kėdainiai), where the Duke appointed him a *starosta* (territorial administrator), but also in Birże, Kaunas, Vilnius, Warsaw and Königsberg. His experience and skills gave him a distinct advantage as a suitable agent to represent Radziwiłł in everything, from small business matters to complex financial transactions. Acting in his name, Bennett was to be the embodiment of the Duke's authority over his subjects. The collaboration with the Duke helped Bennett to increase his wealth, improve his social standing and, ultimately, become a member of the Polish nobility.

KEYWORDS: Scots; Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; the Radziwiłłs; Factors; Agents.

Among the many Scots who migrated to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the seventeenth century were numerous merchants, craftsmen, military men, members of the clergy and diplomats. A number of them rose to prominence and were admitted to noble estate and high office. Some became members of the royal court or confidantes of the wealthiest and most powerful Polish aristocrats¹. Among the diplomats were a number of envoys, negotiators, factors and/or agents, delegated either by the state, church authorities or their families to travel to Poland-Lithuania with specific missions. While some like, James Bavington Jeffereys (British resident agent in Gdańsk, active between 1719 and 1725)² arrived there directly from the British Isles, others such as Dr William Bruce (British resident agent in Poland, active between 1604 and 1610)³ or Sir James Murray (Stuart's envoy to the Polish-

1 For the most comprehensive account of Scottish migration to Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth please refer to: Peter Paul Bajer, *Scots in the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth, 16th to 18th Centuries: The Formation and Disappearance of an Ethnic Group* (Leiden: Brill, 2012); Waldemar Kowalski, *The Great Immigration: Scots in Cracow and Little Poland, circa 1500-1660* (Leiden: Brill, 2012); Michael Broun Ayre, *The Scottish Community in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, 1630-1750* (Kaunas: Humanitas, 2020). See also Zenon Guldon and Karol Krzystanek, "Żydzi i Szkoci w Sandomierzu w XVI-XVIII wieku", *Studia Historyczne* 31, n. 4 (1988): 539-41; Rimantas Žirgulis, "The Scottish community in Kėdainiai ca. 1630-ca.1750", in *Scottish Communities Abroad In The Early Modern Period*, eds. Alexia Grosjean and Steve Murdoch (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

2 Adam Heymowski, "Udostojnienie herbu Jakuba Dziafry (Jamesa Jeffereys'a) przy pasowaniu na rycerza złotego w 1676 r.", in *Materiały do biografii, genealogii i heraldyki polskiej*, vol. 10, eds. Andrzej Stanisław Ciechanowiecki et al. (Warszawa: DiG, 2005), 241-44.

3 Stanisław Kot, "Bruce William", in *PSB*, vol. (1937), 3-4; Gary M. Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives*



Lithuanian Commonwealth, active circa 1601 to 1603)⁴ came to represent English or Scottish interests because of their prior experience at the court of the King of Poland.

The missions of these high-profile diplomats are documented reasonably well. Far less is known about the Scots working at the courts of most prominent Polish-Lithuanian aristocratic families. Yet, the backgrounds of such individuals, the roles they played, and the skill sets they needed to possess in order to fulfil their various functions were not that dissimilar from those displayed by their more celebrated counterparts. A thought-provoking case study of such activity is the career of *Jerzy (George) Bennett* (Benet, Benett, Bennet), a personage noted in the *Polish Biographical Dictionary*⁵, who became an agent and close confidant of Duke Bogusław Radziwiłł (1620–69)⁶, a member of one of the mightiest and most influential families of Poland-Lithuania at that time (Fig. 1)⁷.

The Duke was born in 1620 in Gdańsk. He was the son of Janusz I Radziwiłł of Birze and Dubinki (1579–1620) and Princess Elisabeth Sophia Hohenzollern von Brandenburg (1589–1629), daughter of Johann Georg, Elector of Brandenburg⁸. Bogusław's father possessed an enormous fortune, which incorporated lands inherited from his ancestors and acquired through his first marriage to Princess Zofia Olelkowicz Słucka. On her deathbed in 1612, she left him a vast estate, including 7 castles and 32 villages. Janusz I died when the Duke was only an infant, making him his sole heir⁹.

Duke Bogusław was raised by his uncle Krzysztof II Radziwiłł and remained under his tutelage until he was 16 years old. He then became a courtier of King Władysław IV Vasa and began his independent political career. Between 1637 and 1648 he travelled around Europe, taking part in the fighting in Flanders in 1640 on the side of the Netherlands, and in 1642 in the Dutch war against Spain under

1509–1688, (London: Offices of the Royal Historical Society, 1990), 214; Anna Biegańska, "In Search of Tolerance: Scottish Catholics and Presbyterians in Poland", *Scottish Slavonic Review*, n. 17 (1991): 47; Anna Biegańska, "The Learned Scots in Poland", *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 43/1 (2001): 18–9.

4 Jan Pentek, "Murray James", in PSB, vol. 20 (1975), 278–79; Cf. Anna Biegańska, "James Murray: A Scot in the Making of the Polish Navy", *Scottish Slavonic Review*, 3 (1984): 1–9.

5 Ryszard Mielnicki, "Bennet Jerzy", in PSB, vol. 1 (1935), 428. Note: Although most contemporary records referred to him as Bennet, he and later his sons all signed as "Bennett". His first name was recorded as "George" during his first years in Kiejdany (1650–1654); but since 1655, it was rendered into Polish as "Jerzy". LVIA, fond 606, B 144–145, *Metryka Zboru Kiejdanskiego w ktorey sa zapisane chrzty y sluby w parafiey tey odprowowane od roku MDCXLI [...]*.

6 There is no contemporary biography of Duke Bogusław Radziwiłł. The only published work in 1878, written by Bernard Kalicki, is now regarded as mostly obsolete as Kalicki did not have access to many primary sources. Cf. Bernard Kalicki, *Bogusław Radziwiłł, koniuszy litewski* (Kraków: Czas, 1878). More reliable sources of information about Radziwiłł include: Tadeusz Wasilewski, "Zarys dziejów Bogusława Radziwiłła", in Bogusław Radziwiłł, *Autobiografia*, ed. Tadeusz Wasilewski (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1979); Tadeusz Wasilewski, "Radziwiłł Bogusław", in PSB, vol. 30 (1987), 161–72. Most recent articles about Radziwiłł include: Rafał Degiel, "Cudzoziemcy w zarządzie dóbr Bogusława Radziwiłła", *Barok: historia, literatura, sztuka*, 16/2 (2009): 65–86; Karen Friedrich, "Sługa dwóch panów? Bogusław Radziwiłł jako gubernator Prus (1657–1669)", Paper delivered at "The Princes Radziwiłł – Lithuania's richest magnate dynasty" Conference, Vilnius, Lithuania, November 2015; and Marek Miłunski, "Zarząd dóbr Bogusława Radziwiłła w latach 1636–1669", in *Administracja i życie codzienne w dobrach Radziwiłłów XVI–XVIII wieku*, ed. Urszula Augustyniak, (Warszawa: DiG, 2009), 195–285. Of interest is also manuscript: BK PAN, sygn. BK00354, *Żywot Jaśnie Oświeconego [...] Bogusława Radziwiłła świętego państwa rzymskiego xiążęcia na Birżach, Dubinkach, Słucku i Kopylu etc etc [...]*, (1727). The work has been transcribed and printed in 1840: Antoni Popliński, *Żywot książęcia Bogusława Radziwiłła [...]*, (Poznań-Trzemeszno: Księgarnia Walentego Stefańskiego, 1840). Cf. Adolf Hutten-Czapski, "Nagrobek Bogusława księcia Radziwiłła i małżonki jego, Anny Marii w kościele katedralnym ewangelickim w Królewcu", Part 1, *Przyjaciel Ludu*, 15 (1840): 113–16; Part 2, in *Ibid.*, 16 (1840): 122–23; Andrzej Rachuba, "Sprawa dóbr Radziwiłłów birżańskich w latach 1655–1662", *Miscellanea Historico-Archivistica*, 7 (2006): 51–70.

7 For information about the Radziwiłł family please refer to: Peter Paul Bajer, "Short history of the Radziwiłł Family", *The Annals of the Polish Museum and Archives in Australia*, vol. 4 (2011): 15–27; Peter Paul Bajer, "Rijkdom, invloed en prestige: En korte geschiedenis van de familie-Radziwiłł", *Oost Europa Verkenningen*, 162 (2000): 39–53; Sławomir Górzyński, *Radziwiłłowie herbu Trąby* (Warszawa: DiG, 1996); Teresa Zielińska, *Poczet polskich rodów arystokratycznych* (Warszawa: WSiP, 1997), 303–48.

8 Tadeusz Wasilewski, "Janusz Radziwiłł", in PSB, vol. 30 (1987), 202–08; Leopold von Zedlitz-Neukirch: *Neues preussisches Adels-Lexicon: oder genealogische und diplomatische Nachrichten von den in der preussischen Monarchie ansässigen oder zu derselben in Beziehung stehenden fürstlichen, gräflichen, freiherrlichen und adeligen Häusern*, vol. 4 (Leipzig: Verlag Gebrüder Reichenbach, 1837), 82.

9 Wasilewski, "Janusz Radziwiłł", 202–08; Górzyński, *Radziwiłłowie*, 7; Zielińska, *Poczet polskich rodów*, 307–08.

the command of Frederik Hendrik, Prince of Orange. For a short period of time, as a Colonel, he also commanded a unit of foreign mercenaries in France¹⁰.

Upon his return to the country in 1648, Bogusław engaged in political activities and took part in several military campaigns. He fought against the Cossacks during the uprising in Ukraine, where he commanded an *autorament cudzoziemski* (regiment of foreigners) and participated in the siege of Mogilev during the Polish-Muscovite war. Craving more political power, during the Swedish invasion of Poland-Lithuania, together with his cousin Janusz II Radziwiłł, Bogusław entered negotiations with Karl X Gustav of Sweden. Aiming to break up the Commonwealth and the Polish-Lithuanian union, he signed the Agreement of Kiejdany, a treaty according to which a union between Sweden and Lithuania was founded. In line with the pact, Bogusław and Janusz II were to become rulers of two duchies carved up from the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The Swedish defeat ended the Radziwiłłs' plans. Janusz II died at Tykocin Castle, besieged by forces loyal to the Commonwealth, and Bogusław fled to East Prussia, where he became an ally of Friedrich Wilhelm von Hohenzollern, Elector of Brandenburg, and supported him against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Radziwiłł's forces were decimated at the Battle of Prostki (1656), and he himself was captured. Despite all these setbacks and being regarded as a traitor in Poland-Lithuania, Radziwiłł, thanks to the intercession of von Hohenzollern, secured an amnesty for himself and his followers, and regained his position and lost estates¹¹.

The Duke's immense fortune was boosted through marriage to his second cousin, Anna VI Maria Radziwiłł (1640–67), daughter of Janusz II and granddaughter of Janusz I. The nuptials made Duke Bogusław the master of all the property of the line of Birże and Dubinki, and, according to Miłtuński, the greatest land holder in the whole Poland-Lithuania. Among the most important estates belonging to him were Bielica (Belitsa), Birże (Biržai), Dubinki (Dubingiai), Kiejdany (Kiejdany, Kėdainiai), Kojdanów (today Дзяржынск), Kopył (Копыль), Nowel (Невель), Nowe Miasto (Žemaičių Naumiestis), Sereje (Seirijai), Solec, Słuck (Слуцк), Węgrów, Wiżuny (Vyžuonos) and Żuprany (Жупраны), located in Wileńskie (Vilnius), Nowogródzkie (Navahrudak), Trockie (Trakai), Witebskie (Vitebsk), Mińskie (Minsk), Podlachia and Volhynia voivodeships¹².

From the late 1650s, Duke Bogusław spent most of his time either travelling for his political and business interests, or in Königsberg with his court of around 100 people¹³. It was from there, in 1658, that he began implementing the process of an administrative reform of all his war-ravaged estates¹⁴.

In order to implement an efficiently functioning administration and rebuild his properties, the Duke was in a desperate need of trustworthy representatives who would perform, on his behalf, diverse functions, responsibilities and missions. The group that he initially gathered around himself was small and consisted mainly of members of the Polish nobility. Radziwiłł, however, also needed well-educated, competent and confident agents who could not only act in his name, keep accounting books and submit regular written reports, but who preferably also had a knowledge of Polish, German and Latin, the languages used in the administration of Radziwiłł's estates. It seems that the decisive competency from the Duke's point of view was the candidate's commercial and/or administrative experience¹⁵.

The dearth of local talent forced Radziwiłł to seek out suitably qualified immigrants from Livonia, Courland and Western Europe. His prior contacts with such foreigners made him believe in the great value of employing individuals of that ilk. In his treatise *Observatie pewne circa Politica, Œconomica y rządu dobrego* [...] (*Observations regarding good political and economic governance*), the Duke

10 Wasilewski, "Radziwiłł Bogusław", 161-72; Górczyński, *Radziwiłłowie*, 12-4; Zielińska, *Poczet polskich rodów*, 310-11.

11 Wasilewski, "Radziwiłł Bogusław", 161-72; Górczyński, *Radziwiłłowie*, 12-4; Zielińska, *Poczet polskich rodów*, 310-11.

12 Miłtuński, "Zarząd dóbr Bogusława Radziwiłła", 202. Cf. Wasilewski, "Radziwiłł Bogusław", 161-72; Górczyński, *Radziwiłłowie*, 12-4.

13 A register of all his courtiers who accompanied him in Königsberg at the moment of his death in 1669, lists names of 95 individuals. AGAD, AR, XI, n. 51, *Regestr tych Sług Xięcia Jm S. P. którzy aż dotąd ieszczce odprowieni przy Dworze zostaię [...]*, 181-183. Cf. Miłtuński, "Zarząd dóbr Bogusława Radziwiłła", 231.

14 Miłtuński, "Zarząd dóbr Bogusława Radziwiłła", 209-12.

15 Degiel, "Cudzoziemcy w zarządzie dóbr", 67; Miłtuński, "Zarząd dóbr Bogusława Radziwiłła", 239-42.

presented a view that the position of a fortress commander should be entrusted to foreigners, as they «have no home nor family»¹⁶. According to him, such persons were more loyal, dependent and willing to defend the Duke's interests and property than locals. It is highly likely that similar characteristics were taken into consideration when filling other positions and, specifically, when inviting George Bennett into his service.

George Bennett was born in Scotland, probably between 1620 and 1630¹⁷. His coat of arms, granted in 1671, indicates that he descended, most likely, from the Bennets of Chesters or, more precisely, from a Presbyterian branch of this family that settled in the county of Fife¹⁸. George's father was William Bennet (c. 1580/90–1647), minister of the congregations of Monimail (Fife) and Trinity College Kirk in Edinburgh, a member of the Commission of Assembly (1642–46) and his mother was Jean Bonar¹⁹. It is also likely that he was closely related to the Bennets of Grubet. This is evidenced by the similarity of Sir George Bennett's coat of arms to the armorial bearings granted in 1670 to Sir William Bennet of Grubet²⁰.

It is unknown when and under what circumstances George Bennett arrived on the continent, but it has been documented that he was in the service of John II Casimir Vasa, King of Poland²¹. Assuming that, like other Scots, he emigrated at the age of about 16 or 17 years old, he probably arrived in Poland between 1635 and 1645²². His fluency in Polish, as shown through his correspondence, presupposes that he was brought up in the Commonwealth. The documents submitted for naturalization in 1673 suggest that he enlisted in the Polish army soon after arriving in Poland-Lithuania. At that time, another "Bennet", perhaps George's relative, served under the Polish banner. This Bennet commanded an 800-strong unit of German infantry and dragoons during the Polish-Turkish war (1633–34)²³.

George Bennett's name appears for the first time in Polish sources in the records of the Evangelical Reformed Church in Kiejdany, where there was a sizeable Scottish colony from the 1630s until the

16 AGAD, AR, XI, n. 51, *Observatie pewne circa Politica, Œconomica y rzádu dobrego [...]*, 343–56. The document has been published as "Informacja domowa i polityczna Xięcia Bogusława Radziwiłła koniuszego WXL", in Władysław Syrokomla, *Przyczynki do historii domowej w Polsce*, (Wilno: Nakładem A. Assa, 1858), 43–60. Cf. Degiel, "Cudzoziemcy w zarządzie dóbr", 68.

17 Mielnicki mistakenly suggests that Bennett was an Englishman. Mielnicki, "Bennet Jerzy", 428.

18 The coat of arms of Bennets of Chesters was: Gules, a cross patée Or, between three mullets Argent. Robert Riddle Stodart, *Scottish Arms: Being a Collection of Armorial Bearings A.D. 1370–1678*, vol. II, (Edinburgh: William Paterson, 1881), plate 107.

19 Hew Scott, *Fasti ecclesiae scoticanæ: the succession of ministers in the Church of Scotland from the reformation*, vol. I, (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1915), 131–32; George Edward Cokayne, *Complete baronetage*, vol. IV: (1665–1707), (Exeter: W. Pollard & Company, 1909), 283.

20 Both coats of arms were recorded in the Lion Register. Sir William Bennet's of Grubet coat of arms was: Gules, on a chevron between three stars Argent, a cross patées of the First. Crest: a hand issuing out of a cloud, holding forth a cross patée fitched. Motto: *Benedictus qui tollit crucem*. Cf. Alexander Nisbet, *A system of heraldry: speculative and practical: with the true art of blazon, according to the most approved heralds in Europe: illustrated with suitable examples of armorial figures, and achievements of the most considerable surnames and families in Scotland*, &c.: together with historical and genealogical memorials relative thereto, vol. I (Edinburgh: Alex Lawrie and Co., 1804), 125; vol. II, plate XII. The coat of arms of Sir George (Jerzy) Bennett was: Gules, on a chevron between 3 mullets Argent, as many cross patées of the First; on a canton Azure, a saltire Argent charged with an escutcheon of the Royal Arms of Scotland. Crest: a demi-lion Or, holding, in its dexter paw, a cross patée fitched Gules. Motto: *Piæ Et Fortiter*. – ДАХО, фонд 230, Оп.1, Spr.1143, *Wypis z Ksiąg Szlacheckich Gubernii Litto-Wileńskiej Wyvodu Familii Uuch Bennetów* (21 IX 1805), ff. 6–7. Note that this coat of arms has been mentioned in Nisbet, but the blazon given there did not include the information about the canton. Cf. Nisbet, *A system of heraldry*, Vol. I, 125.

21 NAS, C2/63, *The Register of the Great Seal of Scotland*, f. 23: *The grant of baronetcy to George Bennet*, 28 July 1671.

22 Bajer, *Scots in the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth*, 129.

23 Biblioteka Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Akc. 1949/0439, *Zbiór aktów, instrukcji sejmikowych, diariuszy sejmikowych, mów etc.*, 16–17 w., ze zbioru Steinwehra, f. 338: *Comput Woiska Korony w Obozie pod Kamieńcem przeciw Cesarzowi Tureckiemu będącego R. 1634*. Note that Anna Biegańska mistakenly identifies them as one and the same person. Cf. Anna Biegańska, *Wielka emigracja Szkotów w Polsce druga połowa XVI–koniec XVII wieku*, (PhD diss., Uniwersytet Śląski, Katowice, 1974), 236–37; Id., "Żołnierze szkoccy w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej", *Studia i Materiały do Historii Wojsk*, 27 (1984): 95, 103. Perhaps this unidentified Bennet was the same as Jerzy Bennett's brother Robert who, according to Scott, was a lieutenant in the Polish Army in 1666. Cf. Scott, *Fasti ecclesiae scoticanæ*, vol. I, 131–32.

middle of the eighteenth century²⁴. In 1650, he was recorded there as a godfather of Judith Mollison, and in 1652 on the baptismal record of George Robertson²⁵. In the same year Bennett married Sophia Arnet (Arnott), daughter of Jan (John), a local merchant and fellow countryman, and Katarzyna²⁶. He may have already begun developing his trading business, possibly planning to permanently settle in the town. In 1655, he was appointed a *ławnik* (lay member of the judiciary) of the municipal council²⁷. In the same year he faded from the records, only to reappear in 1659. His disappearance coincided with the Swedish and Muscovite invasions of the Commonwealth, and the chaos caused by internal conflicts among the various magnate factions. During that period, Bennett most likely re-entered military service. When the hostilities ended, Bennett obtained the title of secretary to the King (*Sekretarz JKM*) from John II Casimir Vasa in 1660²⁸. The King had a tendency to employ foreigners as his secretaries, however, the documents do not reveal if Bennett has actually worked for the monarch, or if his title was conferred purely as an honour. Bennett was also given property rights and tax exemptions from Bogusław Radziwiłł in 1661²⁹, and made an *administrator of cełł szlacheckich WXL* (Collector of Customs Duties of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in 1662³⁰. All these generous grants suggest that he must have played an important role in the campaigns during the late 1650s and had rendered significant service both to the Crown and the Radziwiłłs³¹.

Although it is difficult to establish the exact circumstances under which Bennett commenced his cooperation with the Radziwiłłs, the tax exemptions privilege letter of 1661 testifies that he worked for them even before the Second Northern War. Duke Bogusław stated that he wanted to reward Bennett for his «loyalty, kindness and steady continuation of services to [Radziwiłł himself] and his ancestors not only in fortunate years but also during the times of disturbance in the Commonwealth of the Polish Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania»³². This may suggest that, initially, Bennett served under the command of Janusz II Radziwiłł, who led a successful campaign against the Cossacks in Ukraine (1649). Later, the Scot may have joined the regiment of foreign troops led by the Duke himself. They may have also fought side-by-side at the Battle of Beresteczko (1651) and with the Confederates during the drive to expel the Muscovites from Lithuania and Livonia (1654–55).

Bennett's proven service record, educational level, commercial experience and religious denomination would have made him a prime candidate to represent Radziwiłł's interests. The patron-client relationship that ensued was the closest, it seems, during the last nine years of the Duke's life, from 1660 to 1669. An exchange of 34 letters between the pair, dating from 1663 to 1669, survives in the archives in Vilnius and Warsaw (Fig. 2). The correspondence reveals much about Bennett's responsibilities and character, as well as the frequency of contact between the Scot and the Duke; on average, Bennett dispatched a

24 Ayre, *The Scottish Community*, 51-134; Linas Eriksonas, "The lost colony of Scots: unravelling overseas connections in a Lithuanian town", in *Ships, Guns and Bibles in the North Sea and the Baltic States, c. 1350–c.1700*, eds. Allan Iain Macinnes, Thomas Riis and Frederik Jakob Galster Pedersen (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000), 173-87; Žirgulis, "The Scottish community in Kėdainiai", 225-45; Cf. Bajer, *Scots in Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth*, 277-81.

25 LVIA, fond 606, B 144-145, *Metryka Zboru Kieydanskiego [...]*, (27 September 1650), f. 9; Ibid. (10 September 1652), f. 11.

26 Lietuvos Mokslų Akademijos Biblioteka-Vilnius, Rankraščiu skyrius, fond 9-3040, *Collecta Zboru Kieydańskiego: To jest rachunek wszystkich recept i expens zborowych zaczęty roku 1628 dnia 20 novembra*, (typescript) Wilno: 1939, 37, 45, 66, nn.; LVIA, fond 606, B 144-145, *Metryka Zboru Kieydanskiego [...]*, *Certificate of marriage between Georgius Bennett and Sophia Arnott (11 II 1652)*, f. 63 v.

27 Antanas Tyla, "Decemviratas, arba Tertio ordo communitatis Kėdainių savivaldoje (XVII–XVIII a)", in *Lietuvos istorijos metraštis 1999 metai* (Vilnius: LII leidykla, 2000), 72.

28 LVIA, fond 708-2-1, *Zbiór wywodów familiynych szlacheckich gubernii litewsko-wileńskiey*, f. 63v: *Wypis z Ksiąg Szlacheckich Subgubernii Litto-Wileńskiej Wyvodu Familii Urodzonych Bennetów* (20 December, 1819). I am most grateful to the late Michael Ayre for providing me with a copy of this document.

29 VUB, fond 4, A 212, *Copya Przywileiu S.P. Xcia Jmci dana nieb. P. Bennetowi na Kamienice w Kieydanach leżącą [...]*, (27 May, 1661), f. 16640.

30 This privilege was subsequently confirmed in 1663 by the Polish sejm. LVIA, fond 708-2-1, *Zbiór [...]*, f. 63v: *Wypis z Ksiąg Szlacheckich Subgubernii [...]* 1819, f. 63v.

31 Cf. Ayre, *The Scottish Community*, 256.

32 VUB, fond 4, A 212, *Copya Przywileiu [...]*, f. 16640.

letter to Radziwiłł every 10 to 12 days. The Duke replied with similar regularity³³.

As is evident in their papers, Bennett represented the Duke in a wide range of functions. His role oscillated from mundane administrative tasks, like reporting on the state of particular assets (e.g. the Duke's residence, the local mill or the grange)³⁴, returning loans³⁵, paying wages and fees³⁶, issuing receipts or forwarding letters³⁷, to matters which required taking initiative and displaying specific practical skills. For instance, Bennett acted as an intermediary in the assessment of assets belonging to the Duke³⁸, the purchase of properties³⁹, recovery of debts, tax and rent collections⁴⁰, settling renovation costs and recovery of the property of the Radziwiłł family⁴¹. It appears that in many of these transactions the Scot was required to assess their feasibility and profitability independently of his patron. In one of his letters, he asked the Duke to show compassion «nad tym ubogim kalectwem poddanemi wizunskimi» («to those wretched subjects residing in Wizuny»). He reasoned that some 150 households were so impoverished that they would be in no position to pay any contributions⁴².

Some of the tasks Bennett was entrusted with demanded first-class negotiating skills and being impervious to contentious situations such as those sparked by difficult custom matters, i.e. rents, debts and tax collections⁴³. In one of his letters to Radziwiłł, Bennett expressed his exasperation regarding the citizens of Kiejdany. He reported that the debtors not only ignored his instructions to obey the Duke's orders and repay their debts, but «śmiechem i żartem mnie zbyli» («mocked and laughed at him») and «wielka mi niewdzięczność oddaia» («showed him great ingratitude»). The same document demonstrated that Bennett was capable of skilfully refuting unjust accusations⁴⁴.

The letters reveal that, as Radziwiłł's agent, Bennett was in contact with a wide range of people, from the burgers and Jews of Kiejdany⁴⁵, to administrators and fortress commanders, and dignitaries such as the Bishop of Vilnius, among others⁴⁶. The correspondence shows that he was considerate and looked after the subjects under his control, regardless of their rank or religious denomination. For example,

33 Of the substantial collection of correspondence between Bennett and the Duke that once must have existed and was kept in the Radziwiłłs' archives, there are currently only 50 letters remaining. Of these: 14 from Bennett to Radziwiłł are in the VUB and further 19 in AGAD; while the VUB houses also 11 letters from Radziwiłł to Bennett. Additionally, in AGAD, there are also 6 letters from Bennett to others. Cf. *Bennet to Radziwiłł (1663–1670)*, VUB, fond 4 (A213) 16732, (A214) 16814, (A216) 17087, (A223) 17521, 17522, 17523, 17526, 17529, 17530, 17532, 17537, 17547, 17550, 17552; *Radziwiłł to Bennet (1668–1669)*, VUB fond 4 (A223) 17533, 17535, 17536, 17541, 17544, 17553, 17554, 17556, 17557, 17558, 17559; and *Correspondence of Jerzy Bennet (1667–1676)*, AGAD AR, V, n. 532, 1–60.

34 VUB, fond 4 (A223) 17529, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, Liberyszki 23 November 1669.

35 VUB, fond 4 (A223) 17533, *Radziwiłł to Bennet*, Königsberg 14 December 1669. Bennett was asked to return a sum of 1600 zł to Morsztyn on behalf of the Duke.

36 VUB, fond 4 (A223) 17535, *Radziwiłł to Bennet*, Warsaw 9 July 1669. Bennett was asked to pay *jurgielt* (a salary) to Jabłoński and to Rymwid, cup-bearer of Mozyr district.

37 VUB, fond 4 (A223) 17544, 17553, 17554, 17556, 17557, 17558, 17559, *Radziwiłł to Bennet*.

38 VUB, fond 4 (A223) 17526, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, 6 November 1669: Bennett reported on his trip to Kaunas where, on the Duke's instruction, he assessed the state of Radziwiłł's *kamienica* (tenement house). Bennett conducted a similar appraisal of the estate Sereje: Ibid., 17530, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, Bergaszki, 29 November 1669.

39 VUB, fond 4 (A223), 17541, *Radziwiłł to Bennet*, Königsberg 26 February 1669. Instruction to purchase a Świerociszki grange.

40 AGAD, AR, V, n. 532, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, Koronów 19 November 1661, f. 1–3; Ibid., *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, Nowe Miasto 8 January 1668, ff. 14–6; VUB fond 4 (A223) 17537, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, Kiejdany 16 April 1669; Ibid., 17552, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, Kiejdany 16 December 1668.

41 VUB, Fond 4 (A223) 17526, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, 6 November 1669.

42 AGAD, AR, V, n. 532, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, Kiejdany 17 March 1668, ff. 34–7.

43 Cf. AGAD, AR, V, n. 532, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, Koronów 19 November 1661, ff. 1–3.

44 VUB, fond 4 (A213) 16814, *Bennet to Radziwiłł (1664)*.

45 VUB, fond 4 (A223) 17552, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, Kiejdany 16 December 1668.

46 VUB, fond 4 (A223) 17522, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, Wizuny 23 August 1669.

he was involved in organizing a new vicar for the local Roman Catholic parish (Fr. Kossakowski)⁴⁷ and, in 1669, paid dues for the poor of Kiejdany, Nowe Miasto and Wiżuny, who were themselves unable to pay *podymne* (hearth tax)⁴⁸.

Bennett played two other important roles. Firstly, he provided local political intelligence⁴⁹ and reported on troop movements⁵⁰ in the lands surrounding the Duke's estate. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, Bennett was required, as were all high-ranking officials working for Radziwiłł, to represent the Duke's authority over his subjects, as he himself seldom visited his vast domain⁵¹. Bennett travelled widely in the Duke's service, journeying even as far as Cracow, a distance of some 770 kilometres from Kiejdany⁵².

The considerable service provided to the Duke resulted in Radziwiłł's decision, in January 1668, to appoint Bennett a *starosta kiejdański*⁵³. Such offices were, mostly, leased to people who had the means to pay for them, providing Radziwiłł with one of his main sources of revenue, but the most important grants, like that bestowed on the Scot, were given only to the most trusted of the Duke's confidantes⁵⁴. The military service, commercial activity and assistance rendered to the Radziwiłłs brought Bennett other profits, too. Around the middle of the seventeenth century, he built a brick tenement house in the main market square of Kiejdany, with warehouses located in the basement, an inn on the ground floor and residential quarters on the first floor⁵⁵. He also owned another tenement house near the market square which he purchased from Trzeciak (1661), as well as a shop, or perhaps a stall, adjacent to the Town Hall⁵⁶.

Bennett was strongly connected to the Scottish community in Kiejdany. In 1658 he served as a *szafarz* (treasurer) and in 1661 was elected an elder of the Calvinist congregation. During this time, Bennett financed various repairs and projects related to the church building. In 1663, he ordered the construction of a family grave in the church's crypt⁵⁷. Five years later, in 1668, he sold one of his tenement houses to a countryman, Jerzy Anderson, the mayor of Kiejdany. Probably at that time he moved to his country estate and began the process of applying for Polish nobility⁵⁸.

In 1670, Bennett petitioned the Privy Council of Scotland for a birth brief. In his application, he wrote that for a number of years he had served in the Commonwealth's army, held the office of Secretary to the King of Poland, and permanently resided in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Bennett's petition was supported by evidence confirming his ancestry, supplied by the Laird of Moncrieff and other Scottish noblemen⁵⁹. Next, the Scot applied to the Stuart king, Charles II, to be granted the hereditary

47 VUB, fond 4 (A223) 17087, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, Wiżuny 4 January 1670.

48 VUB, fond 4 (A223) 17537, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, Kiejdany 16 April 1669.

49 AGAD, AR, V, n. 532, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, Kiejdany, 24 December 1667, f. 7-10; Ibid., Rosienie, 25 July 1668, ff. 45-6.

50 AGAD, AR, V, n. 532, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, Kiejdany, 24 December 1667, ff. 53-6.

51 Cf. information about the Duke's expectations in regards to his officials: Miłunski, "Zarząd dóbr Bogusława Radziwiłła", 230.

52 VUB, fond 4 (A223) 17522, *Bennet to Radziwiłł*, Wiżuny 23 August 1669.

53 Andrzej Rachuba, "Udział 'Inflantczyków' i oficerów cudzoziemskiego pochodzenia w życiu publicznym Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego w latach 1569-1732", in *Rzeczpospolita państwem wielu narodowości i wyznań. XVI-XVIII wiek*, eds. Tomasz Ciesielski and Anna Filipczak-Kocur (Warszawa-Opole: DiG, 2008), 437; Miłunski, "Zarząd dóbr Bogusława Radziwiłła", 271 – erroneously noted Bennet as "Jan" (John).

54 Miłunski, "Zarząd dóbr Bogusława Radziwiłła", 209-12.

55 Algirdas Juknevičius, *Scottish Heritage in Kėdainiai: A study of the Scottish Community in Kėdainiai, Lithuania during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Vilnius: Savastis, 2015), 17; Žirgulis, "The Scottish community in Kėdainiai", 247; Eriksonas, "The lost colony of Scots", 178.

56 VUB, fond 4, A 212, *Copja Przywileiu* [...]; "Plan rynku wg. rysunku Wawrzyńca Kochańskiego (ze zbiorów prywatnych)", *Kwartalnik Architektury i Urbanistyki* 4 (1959): 1-2.

57 *Collecta Zboru*, 108, 113-15, 120.

58 Juknevičius, *Scottish Heritage in Kėdainiai*, 17.

59 Steve Murdoch and Alexia Grosjean, "Scotland, Scandinavia & Northern Europe, 1580-1707", database available at <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/history/ssne>, SSNE n. 5307; Cf. *Register of the Privy Council of Scotland*, 3rd series, III, 374.

title of baronet of Scotland. The request provides information about Bennett's wealth – an applicant was required to pay 2000 Scottish merks to the King's Exchequer or to support six colonial settlers for the period of two years. His application was successful and, on 28 July 1671, Charles II created him a baronet⁶⁰. The rank of baronet was unknown in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and this is probably why Sir George Bennett was wrongly designated a "baron" in the confirmation of nobility status documents issued to Bennett's descendants⁶¹.

Bennett probably returned to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth soon after this successful mission as his name appears on Hetman Michał Kazimierz Pac's [1624–1682] *Uniwersał* (proclamation). According to this document, in May 1673 Bennett offered to raise 300 dragoons for the Khotyn campaign against the Ottoman Empire⁶². It was a significant and valuable offer, as evidenced by the rivalry between Hetmans Pac and Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł [1625–1680], who wanted to attract Bennett to side with them⁶³.

Bennett not only raised «two hundred well-equipped dragoons» but, as a major, led his unit in the Battle of Khotyn (11 November 1673). According to the Lithuanian army register from that campaign, Bennett's two dragoon companies consisted of 90 and 84 horses⁶⁴. His participation in this victorious battle was immortalised in a poem *Virtus dexteræ Domini* (God's Righteous Forces) written by his son Jakub (James) Bennett⁶⁵. According to Ulčinaite, Jakub Bennett combined an account of the real battle, based most likely on his father's testimony, with ancient mythology. He described the heroism of 48 individuals (executors of God's will), including the courageous deeds of his father (Fig. 3)⁶⁶. Sir George Bennett's bravery and magnanimity was noticed by King Michał Wiśniowiecki who, in return for his service, rewarded him with an *indygenat* (grant of nobility to foreign nobles). By the same act, Wiśniowiecki granted Bennett a tenement house at Końska Street in Vilnius⁶⁷.

Like other foreigners applying for admission to the Polish nobility, Bennett was granted his "naturalization" on condition of providing a proof of nobility and lineage issued by a foreign court, and taking an oath of allegiance to the Commonwealth and the King⁶⁸. He successfully fulfilled all

Unfortunately, a description of this document has not been transcribed into the *The Register of the Great Seal of Scotland*. According to dr Alan Borthwick, Head of Medieval Records at the National Records of Scotland [NRS], Bennett most likely received the birth brief with the Great Seal attached, but the document itself was not copied into the Great Seal Register. Dr Borthwick has identified a similar case in GD2/124. In this instance the *Birth brief granted to Sir Gabriel Wood, son of David Wood, M.A., of Aberdeen, by Charles II, dated at Edinburgh on 21 August, 1672, and written to the Great Seal 8 April, 1673*, held by NRS was, likewise, not included in the Register of the Great Seal. I am most grateful to dr Borthwick and Ms Alison Lindsay, Head of Historical and Legal Search Rooms (NRS), for their invaluable assistance.

60 NAS, C2/63, *The Register*[...] f. 23: *The grant of baronetcy to George Bennet*; Cokayne; *Complete baronetage*, vol. IV, 283; John Burke and John Bernard Burke, *Encyclopaedia of Heraldry or general Armory of England, Scotland and Ireland, comprising a registry of all armorial bearings from the earliest to the present time, including the late grants by the college of arms* (London: H. G. Bohn, 1847), 65.

61 Cf. ДАХО, фонд 230, Оп.1, Spr.1143, *Wypis z Ksiąg Szlacheckich Gubernii [...] (1805)*, ff. 6-7r.

62 VUB, фонд 7, n. 29/14481, *Uniwersał hetmana Paca*, Wilno 6 May 1673, f. 70-70v; Cf. Konrad Bobiatyński, *Michał Kazimierz Pac-wojewoda wileński, hetman wielki litewski* (Warszawa: Neriton, 2008), 285. I would like to thank Dr Zbigniew Hundert for referring me to this article.

63 Konrad Bobiatyński, "W drodze pod Chocim. Litewskie przygotowania do wojny przeciwko Turkom w 1673 roku", in eds. Mirosław Nagielski and Sławomir Górzyski, *Studia z dziejów Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego XVI-XVIII wieku*, (Warszawa: DiG, 2014), 35.

64 Bobiatyński, "W drodze pod Chocim", 45.

65 Eugenija Ulčinaite, *Lietuvos renesanso ir baroko literatūra* (Vilnius: VUL, 2001), 211-13; Cf. Vytautas Ališauskas, *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštijos kultūra. Tyrinėjimai ir vaizdai* (Vilnius: Aidai, 2001), 310.

66 Jacob Bennet, *Virtus Dexteræ Domini: In Virtute Polonorum Litvanorumq; Ostensa: Atque Illustrissimo Domino D. Michaeli Casimiro Pac [...] Et Illustrissimo Ac Excellentissimo Domino D. Michaeli Casimiro Radziwiłł [...] Nec Non Toti Exercitvi M. D. Litvaniæ [...] Dicata A Iacobo Bennet* (Wilno: Typ. Acad., 1674), 23-4.

67 VL, V, 152 n. 28 and VL, V, 440 n. 60.

68 Jan Michta, "Nobilitacja i indygenat w szlacheckiej Rzeczypospolitej", *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska. Sectio F, Historia*, 45 (1990): 355-63; Cf. Tadeusz Szulc, "Indygenat w Rzeczypospolitej w świetle konstytucji sejmowych w latach 1588-1793", *Sprawy i Czynności i Posiedzeń Naukowych ŁTN*, 15 (1980): 1-10.

the conditions three years later, in 1676⁶⁹. The death of the monarch and the *interregnum* that followed were probably responsible for a delay in completing the naturalization process. It seems, however, that Bennett was already recognised as a nobleman by his peers. In 1674, together with the nobility of the Wiłkomirski district, he took part in the election of King John III Sobieski⁷⁰. He was also in charge of Wiżuny estate, given to him by Bogusław Radziwiłł as a bond⁷¹. Around the same time, using the dowry of his wife (15'000 złotys), Bennett bought Jaswonie (Lit. Josvainiai) in Samogitia⁷².

The Scot's family life was equally successful. Bennett was married at least twice. His first wife was the aforementioned Zofia Arnet, who died in Kiejdany around 6 February 1661. He then married Anna Zofia Castelle (Kasztelle), née Rauter of Elbląg⁷³. Of his seven children, three sons, Jan (John), Hugo Benjamin (b. 1661) and Wilhelm (William) (b. 1665), continued their father's tradition of military service. All were referred to in the documents as *towarzysz* (companion, comrade). This designation was reserved for Polish or Lithuanian noblemen of means – junior cavalry officers, who with their mounted retainers, served under the Commonwealth's banner⁷⁴. While nothing is known about Wilhelm's fate – it is possible that he was killed in action – the other two brothers rose further in social standing. Jan became *podstoli braclawski* (Master of the Pantry of Braslav)⁷⁵ and Hugo *stolnik drohicki* (Pantler of Drohicz). Another of their brothers, Jakub (James) received the post of *stolnik mozyrski* (Pantler of Mozyr). Jakub and Hugo became the ancestors of the two branches of the family whose descendants lived in the territories of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and confirmed their nobility in the nineteenth century (Fig. 4)⁷⁶.

Bennett died in 1677⁷⁷. He had been a perfect settler, distinguishing himself as an effective military officer, a successful merchant, a competent official in town and church administration, an important leader of his community and a trusted agent of the Radziwiłł family. The Scot had shown commitment to his patron and valour in defence of the Commonwealth, as proclaimed in the motto that adorns his coat of arms, *Piæ et fortiter* (Dutifully and Bravely).

ABBREVIATIONS

AGAD: Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie.

AR: Archiwum Warszawskie Radziwiłłów.

BK PAN. Biblioteka Kórnicka PAN.

LVIA: Lietuvos Velstybes Istorijou Archyvos–Vilnius.

NAS: National Archives of Scotland.

PSB: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, t. I–LII (Kraków: PAN, 1935–2019).

VL: *Volumina Legum: przedruk zbioru praw staraniem XX. Pijarów w Warszawie, od roku 1732 do roku 1782, wydane*, 9 vols. Petersburg: Ohryzki, 1859–1889.

VUB: Vilniaus Universiteto Biblioteka.

ДАХО: Державний архів Хмельницької області (State Archives of Khmelnytsky Region) [Державний архів м. Кам'янець-Подільський (State Archives m. Kamianets-Podilskyi) ДАМКП].

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FIGURES



Fig. 1 – Portrait of Bogusław Radziwiłł (1654), Engraving by J. Falck, published by G. Förster, Biblioteka Narodowa, Warsaw.

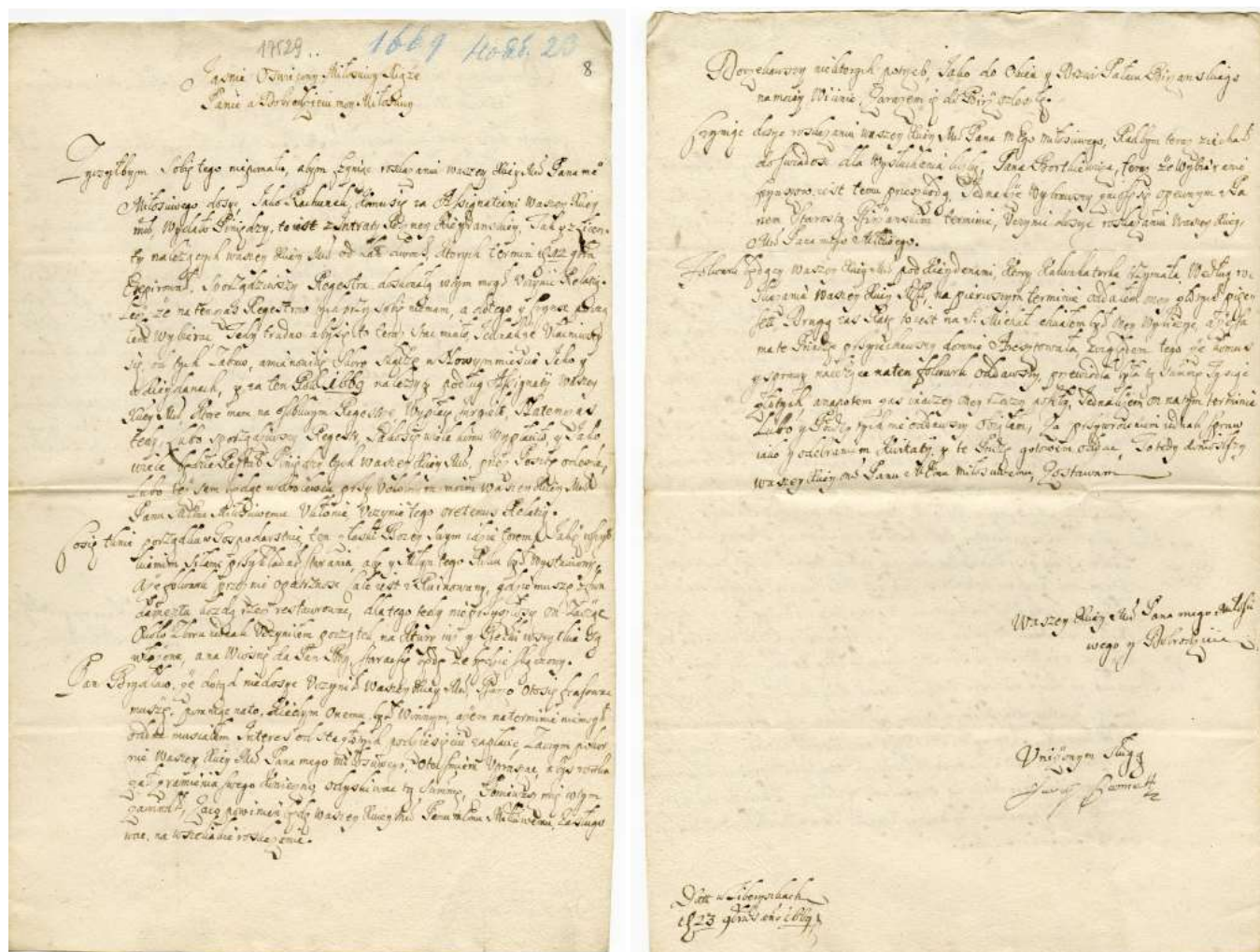


Fig. 2 (2a & 2b) – Letter from Bennett to Radziwiłł (Liberyszki, 23 November 1669), VUB, Vilnius Fond 4 (A223) 17529.

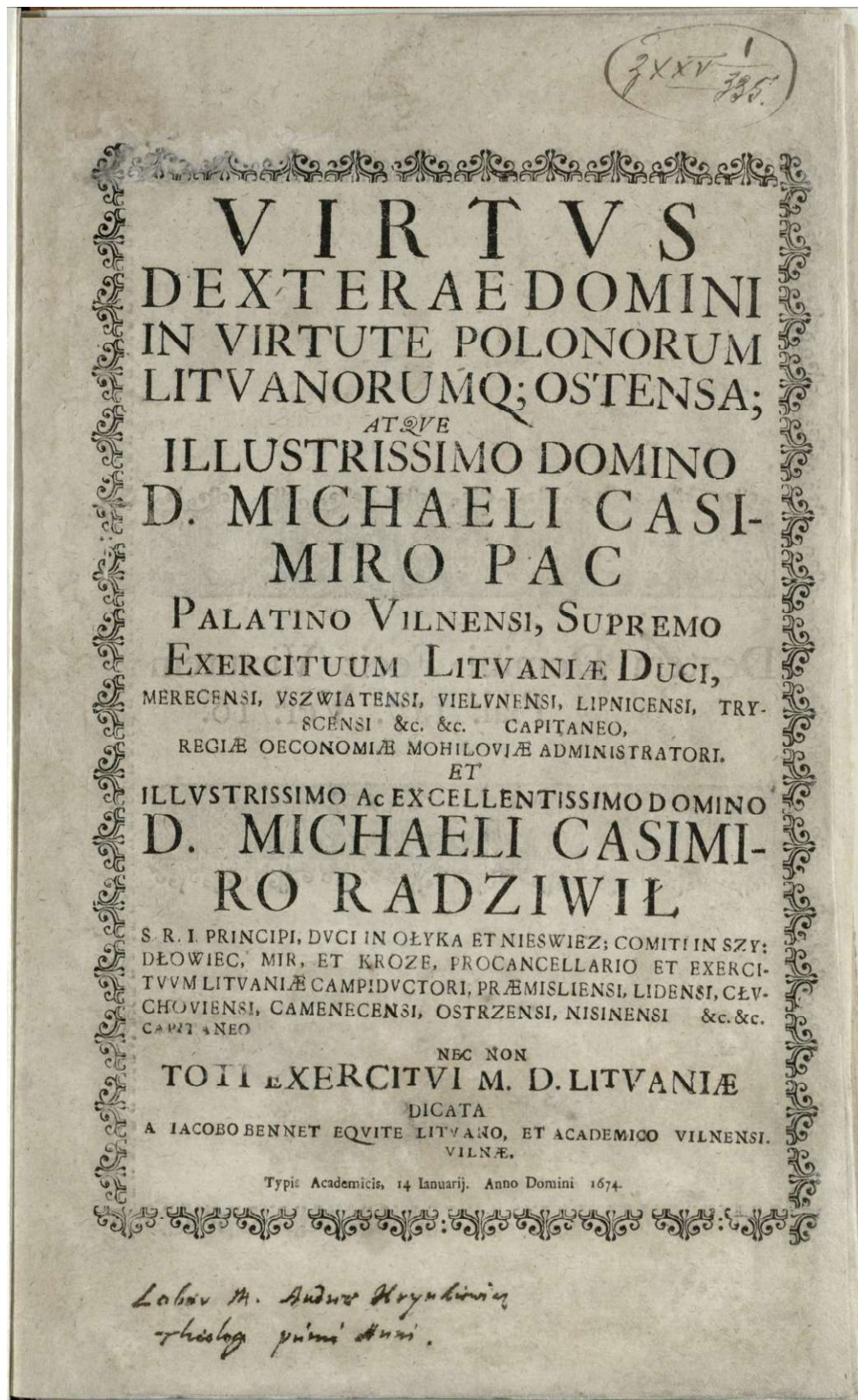


Fig. 3 – Front page of the *Virtus Dexteræ Domini: In Virtute Polonorum Litvanorumq; Ostensa: Atqve Illustrissimo Domino D. Michaeli Casimiro Pac [...]* by Jacob Bennet (Wilno, 1674), VUB, Vilnius BAV 5.2.40/3.



Fig. 4 – Front page of a document confirming nobility status of George Bennett’s descendants - “Wypis z Książ Szlacheckich Subgubernii Litto-Wileńskiej Wywodu Familii Urodzonych Benetów (20 December, 1819)”, in “Zbiór wywodów familiinnych szlacheckich gubernii litewsko-wileńskiej”, LVIA, Vilnius, Fond 708-2-1, f. 63v.